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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
EDITORIALS	49-53
The Permanent Court of Arbitration — The New Army — Civilized Barbarism and Savagery — Appeal for Contributions.	
EDITORIAL NOTES	53-60
War as a Cause of Crime — Immense War Budgets — War Looting at Home — Government Responsible — Lord Roberts' Savage Orders — A Matter of Shambles — War Kills the Human Soul — Disbelief in Christ's Claims — Submerging the Boys — Century of Humanity — "Fair and Glorious Fame!" — Twenty-second of February — MacArthur's Denial — Peace-Loving Monarch — Negotiations in Labor Troubles — Irritating the Cubans — Philippine Government.	
BREVITIES	60-61
GENERAL ARTICLES.	
At a Fireside Century Old. <i>Poem, Elizabeth Samson Hoyt</i>	61-62
Inconsistency. <i>Poem, Asenath Carver Coolidge</i>	62
Queen Victoria's Obsequies Overlaid with Militant Display. <i>Josiah W. Leeds</i>	62-63
The Nonconformist Conscience and the Transvaal War. <i>Herbert W. Horwill</i>	63-64
Evils of Imperialism and Militarism. <i>Cardinal Gibbons</i>	64-66
Suggestions to Christians. <i>Rev. Ernest C. Saunders</i>	66-67
Myself and You. <i>Poem, H. Lavina Bailey</i>	67
NEW BOOKS	67-68
Bare Red-Handed Murder. <i>Elizabeth Stuart Phelps</i>	69
Don't Scold. <i>Ada C. Sweet</i>	69

The Permanent Court of Arbitration.

This title has appeared in our columns so frequently of late that possibly some of our readers may think that we ought to ask pardon for using it again. We think otherwise. So important is this new institution, both for the present and the future, that we should scarcely overdo the matter if we made reference to it every month for the next hundred years — we and our successors.

We mean before long to set up the personnel of the court in the *ADVOCATE OF PEACE*, and let it stand until all our readers become thoroughly convinced of its existence and importance, and acquainted with the names of the distinguished men who constitute its membership. But the time for this has not yet come.

Six of the nations represented at the Hague Conference — namely, China, Mexico, Greece, Luxemburg, Servia and Turkey — have not yet ratified the Convention providing for the court. Of the twenty which have ratified it, four — namely, Bulgaria, Mon-

tenegro, Siam and Persia — have not yet announced their nominees for the court.

The sixteen nations which have named their members of the court include all the important maritime powers. They are Austria-Hungary, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Portugal, Roumania, Russia, Spain, Sweden and Norway, Switzerland and the United States. Ten of these sixteen countries — namely, Austria-Hungary, Belgium, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Netherlands, Roumania, Russia and the United States have each named four members; Spain and Switzerland have named three each; Japan and Sweden and Norway two each, Denmark and Portugal each one.

The court starts, therefore, with a body of fifty-two members, from whom, as provided in the Convention, five arbitrators will be chosen when any two nations decide to have recourse to the tribunal. It is not likely that the other ten nations will choose four members each. So that when the twenty-six countries have made their appointments, the whole number will fall twenty or thirty short of the one hundred and four which the Convention made possible.

On the last day of January the State Department at Washington officially issued a list of the members of the court. This did not include the appointments from Switzerland, which had not then come to the knowledge of the Department. Secretary Hay at the same time gave out that the court was fully organized and ready for business.

What nations will set the new machinery a-going remains to be seen. The United States and Great Britain ought to do so. They have led in the long movement which has finally resulted in the establishment of the court. They ought to lead in the practical employment of it. They do not need to get into a new quarrel in order to do this. They already have on hand a controversy of long standing and no little delicacy. What more fitting than to send the whole Alaska boundary question to the Hague court for settlement? That would be a splendid inauguration of the new institution, from which so much is expected in the future, and also an excellent example to the other nations, some of whom may not feel much inclined to try the court until they have seen how it works in the case of those who have been most eager to have it established.